



EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

Hey everyone, this is Maggie Reyes. Welcome to episode four. Today we're going to talk about a topic that I like calling emotional weight loss and the reason that I came up with emotional weight loss is because the school where I certified as a coach, which is called the Life Coach School certifies weight loss coaches and life coaches. And so I am surrounded by amazing colleagues that teach people how to lose weight and how to be healthier. And one of the things they talk about all the time is this idea of no flour, no sugar. You may have heard of this idea, but basically no flour, no sugar means that when you remove flour and sugar from your eating habits, what happens is whatever is left is what you have to work on in terms of how to get your body healthy. Flour and sugar, really alter the chemistry of your body so that you get hunger signals when you shouldn't have them and you can't really work on what you really need to work on if you're getting like mixed signals, right?

So emotional weight loss came about because I was thinking about what is the no flour, no sugar equivalent for marriage. And I just started thinking, I was with my journal, I was up one morning, just sort of mentally doodling and I thought, what are the things that if you remove them from a marriage, whatever's left is what you really have to deal with. And here's what I came up with. No complaining, no defending. It's like no flour, no sugar. You go without it, no complaining, no defending. Now here's a thing to say the words, no complaining, no defending, is a very simple, just like to say the words. No flour, no sugar. It is very simple. But when you actually go to practice something like no flour, no sugar or a practice, no complaining, no defending. It gets a little bit trickier to practice it and to practice that over time.

So I wanted to share with you first, where the idea came from and then how to implement it, how to approach it and how it helps you in your marriage. So here's the thing. When we are complaining and when we are defending, it's the same thing. We sort of mix with the chemistry of our relationship where we're not really dealing with the things underneath the real core issues





EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

that will help us thrive. We are spending our time if we're complaining and defending often in unnecessary fights or the type of fights that don't move you forward. So believe it or not, there are arguments that are good for you. And how you know if an argument is good for you is at the end of the argument, if you're closer, understand your partner better or have shared of yourself and your partner understands you better, that was actually a constructive and useful argument. If at the end of an argument, you're farther apart, you don't understand each other better, that was not a constructive and useful argument. So think about this, think about the last time you complained about something. What was the result of that complaint? What was the result of it? So many years ago there was a Unity minister and I happened to go to Unity church, which is a metaphysical Christian Church if you're curious. And he did a challenge for his entire congregation, which was to not complain for 21 days to build in the practice of not complaining, and it was a very popular challenge at the time. I'll link to one of his videos, so you can check that out. And this idea of no complaining became very popular and my very first coach that I ever worked with Christine Kane in the very first coaching experience I ever had, we had to sign a no complaint contract and it really moved me back then.

I remember that I was working in HR, I had a gray cubicle. It was like the stereotypical gray cubicle and I told everyone on my team that I was doing this no complaining challenge and that I was wanting to go 21 days without complaining and I'll never forget. I was on day 18 and one of my friends said, "Oh Maggie, I'm so sorry to be the one to tell you this, but I think you just complained," and I had to reboot and start over. And the way the challenge was, I don't know if I explained this in the beginning, but the way the challenge worked was you don't complain for 21 days, but if you miss a day, you start back fresh and you start a new 21 day journey until you can go a full 21 days without complaining. So I love that exercise and it was so useful for me and I really became aware of how often I was complaining and the energy that I was spending complaining about things, which is basically like ruminating on things that aren't working as





EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

opposed to making things work for me.

That is the goal, right? So I did that and when I, years later, you know, had that under my belt, thought about no complaining, no defending. And when you stop complaining, what do you do instead, what takes place of complaining. Here's what takes place of complaining. You make requests, you ask for things. So for example, let's say that I go to a restaurant and the soup was cold. I could go on and on about how could they serve cold soup. This is ridiculous. It's supposed to be warm. Don't they know what they're doing? What's wrong with the chef? What's wrong with the waiter? All the things right. Or I could ask the waiter to come over and say, my soup is cold. Could you please warm it? And solve the problem in one minute. Probably. So notice the difference at the end of a complaint, nothing happens.

I've just ruminated for however long I've taken complaining at the end of a request, I get a result. I either get the answer to my question, I get the warm soup or I find out there is no warm soup and then I could decide do I want to order something else? What changes or things do I want to do instead? So that's number one. Number two, no defending. So a lot of times because we're humans, we don't understand each other as partners. We are confused or we are perplexed as to why we would do different things and how we approach them. And what ends up happening is we find ourselves in defense mode many, many, many more times than is actually necessary or suggested or recommended to really have a five star thriving relationship. So when we say no defending, what do you do instead?

A couple of things that I want you to know about that, there's an excellent writer named Byron Katie who has a quote that I love to quote and I quote it to my clients often, which is "Defense is the first act of war." Defense is the first act of war. Think, think that through for a moment. If we want peace and love and passion and enjoyment and our relationships and defense is the first act of war, and we spend a lot of time defending our ideas, our suggestions, our desires,





EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

then we're spending a lot of time and investing in war instead of building peace and passion and love. So when we remove defense, it's a way to diffuse arguments. It's a way to diffuse disagreements. It's a way to soften what's happening. So in the moment when your partner misunderstands something or when you feel that you need to defend yourself for any reason, you remember no complaining of defending.

And instead of defending, you get curious. You ask questions like a detective collecting evidence in a case you don't know what all the evidence means until you gather it all together and you have no judgment about that evidence until you can gather it all together and then have a conclusion or come to a conclusion about it. So let's say every, everyone that I know has some kind of running disagreement about something, right? So think about your most recent running disagreement or something you've disagreed about for awhile. And think about just asking, why do you feel that way? Tell me more. What are your thoughts about this? Just getting curious with your partner as to why this thing that you disagree on is important to them. Why it matters to them, how they envision it playing out. A lot of times, and I've seen this very often, we're nebulous or unclear about our actual desire and then we don't know how to implement it.

So, for example, uh, several of my clients, they're in second marriages, they have stepchildren, stepdaughters, stepson, and it's like, I want you to get along better with my stepdaughter. Well, what does that look like? Right? In practice, if we got along better, what would be happening? What are some of the things that you envision occurring, right? So instead of defending like, "Oh, but I'm trying to get along with her," which is a defense. It's like, wait, "What would getting along with her better actually look like?" That gives you so much more to work through and to work on and to consider than just staying stuck in defending. And notice that with one route you go into an argument, "Oh, but I'm trying so hard to get along with this person." And then the other person says, "No, you're not. And this is why, right?" There's the that that becomes an argument.





EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

But if you say, “Oh, well, what do you think getting along better with look like?” Suddenly it’s like you both remember you’re on the same team, you want the same things, you want to help each other and then you actually help each other arrive at the goal that you want. In my example, it’s with stepchildren, but it could be anything that you have an ongoing disagreement about. So no complaining, no defending. It’s like no flour, no sugar. It’s super easy to say. It’s not as easy to implement and you have to remember the two things to do instead. So for no complaining, you’re making requests over and over and over again. And I, I just decided while recording this that my next episode is going to be about requests versus demands because I, what I find is a lot of people don’t know how to make requests.

So today, very simple. I gave you the soup example, which is how to make a simple request, but stay tuned for the next episode and we’ll talk about making requests in your relationship on a little bit of a deeper level. Now when you remove complaining and defending, when those two things are no longer an issue, now you can deal with what the real issues in the relationship are. In my stepdaughter example, the real issue is wanting to be a family, wanting to be a unit, wanting to work together, that if we’re sort of distracted by this fight, right about how it’s going, we never get to the real issue. We never get to work on the real thing. And so what I want to help you do really with every episode of the podcast is to not be distracted by things that don’t matter. To really refocus on the things that do matter and the things that move the needle in your relationship.

And if you remember the five-star marriage, let’s go from a one-star to a two-star or from a three-star to a four-star. Let’s get better as we go even while we’re working everything else out. Okay, so I hope that you found that useful. That is the basics of no complaining, no defending. I know if you put it into practice, it will help you so much. You will be so surprised. I have used this exercise with many of my private coaching clients. They’re often shocked to find out how





EPISODE 4: EMOTIONAL WEIGHTLOSS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/4](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/4)

often they complain. They're often shocked to find out how often they feel defensive and when they start like pausing and not going into complaining and defending, it's like a breath of fresh air, but it's also like, "Whoa, I didn't even realize that that was happening." So I hope that helps you. I am so delighted to be sharing these concepts with you and I'm so delighted that you are hopefully enjoying the podcast.

If you are enjoying the podcast, please do leave us a review. Remember to subscribe so that you don't miss an episode. And one last snippet to finish our episode today is I want to give you another behind the scenes of a client experience of working with me in marriage coaching. So here we go. "My experience of working with Maggie is best described in the gap. The gap between what I thought I needed and what I actually needed, the gap between what I expected and what I received, the gap between my head and my heart. I learned to challenge my own thoughts and ask myself hard questions like what do I really want and why? I pushed past patterns of thinking that had become so habitual. I didn't even recognize them as thoughts. I softened, which is harder than it sounds, and Maggie was like the structural engineer, making sure that I had all the support I needed while the conversations with my husband around money and other things were had.

It was hard, but then I found even more headspace and more power. If you choose to work with Maggie, and I really hope you do, she will be your cheerleader all the way and you will need that because pushing past old belief systems is hard, hard work." Thank you so much for that behind the scenes to my client who sent me that note. She is a writer as you can tell by her eloquence, and I do have to say that pushing past old belief systems is something that really does require practice and skill. Just like lifting weights at the gym, but keep practicing and you will get better. Now go forth and have a loving day.

